

**TE 601: THE WRITER'S JOURNEY
SUMMER 2011
SAGINAW VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY**

INSTRUCTORS: **Michael Somers** michaelsomers@delta.edu 989-948-1179 (cell)
 Amber White awhite@nbbronzos.net 810-614-5195 (cell)

DATES: July 11-14, 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

ROOM: Science East 223

OFFICE HOURS: Before and after class, by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Teachers who write are better writing teachers. This course will encourage teachers to learn by examining their own practice as writers, and then applying this knowledge to the development of coherent, effective, standards based writing instruction for their own classrooms. During the class, teachers will write, revise, peer edit, design instruction, and share ideas with a cohort of fellow teachers of all grades levels.



COURSE OUTCOMES

Students will focus on following standards and guidelines: [*Common Core State Standards*](#), the [*International Reading Association*](#), [*Writing Next*](#), and the [*National Council of Teachers of English*](#). Documents containing these standards and guidelines will be provided. In addition, students will be expected to:

- Commit themselves intensely and reflectively to the process of writing.
- Become valued members of a writing community and respond thoughtfully to the writing of others.
- Experience a range of purposes and techniques for writing and writing instruction, including persuasive writing, narrative writing, expository writing, and writing to learn.

*The following additional outcomes are adopted from the work of **Sharon Hill of Manhattan New School**:*

- Discover, experience and practice what we need to teach – write to understand and develop a knowledge of what to teach
- Become meta-cognitive about our own writing – notice and understand our process and our practice as we write in order to share them with our students
- Write to teach – use our writing during mini lessons as a tool for strategic teaching.
The following are examples:
 - Monitor for sense – ask: does this make sense?
 - Decide what information is critical to fulfill the writer's intentions and to promote the reader's understanding
 - Develop an understanding of purpose and audience
 - Think ahead and reread to make sure we are on track
 - Do the revision that comes naturally as we write

- Be strategic in demonstrating intentions

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIAL

A variety of handouts: excerpts from literature, research, and professional articles.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

A variety of strategies will be used to present information and develop understanding of the key components of this class. Teaching strategies will include cooperative learning, interactive lecture, student research and reporting, whole group and small group discussion, lesson planning and evaluation, video tape, DVD, and PowerPoint.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

It is essential that students attend class prepared to participate fully in the following activities: discussions about assigned reading, writing response groups, lesson presentations, and online readings and assignments. Your attendance and participation in class is essential for developing understanding of the course objectives. Your enrollment in this class requires a commitment to fulfilling the requirements set forth in this syllabus. Class participation is vital to meeting the goals of this class, therefore, unless there are unavoidable extenuating circumstances, you should be present for each class.

EVALUATION METHODS (Assignments/Assessable Pieces)

1. **Attendance, Participation, Out-of and In-Class Coursework, Preparation for Class:** Students are expected to arrive on time, return promptly from breaks, and stay until class is dismissed. It is also required that students complete reasonable homework assignments in order to be prepared for related class discussion. Additional hours outside of class are to be spent doing coursework. Students are also expected to participate in all classroom activities and become a contributing member of this learning community.
2. **Revised Piece of Writing:** Write extensively during class. There will be opportunities for you to begin some writing entries during class time, and you should continue working on your writing during our 'sacred writing time' in class. You will be sharing your writing drafts during Writing Response Group sessions. At some point, you should choose one draft to focus on. Take that draft through the revision process. Use feedback from your Writing Response group to help you gain the reader's perspective and revision ideas.

If you need more feedback, set up a time to share your processed draft with us before taking it to final revision form.

Turn in your revision drafts, highlighting areas where significant improvements occurred. (For an additional challenge, you may choose to perform a genre switch, to create a second version of this piece in a different genre.)

3. **Writer's Journey Reflection:** On the last day of class, we will ask you to write a reflection about your journey as a writer during this class. You may want to reflect upon the process of exploring topics, revising drafts, listening to responses during Writing Response group time, the influence of lesson presentation upon your work, etc.
4. **Additional Hour of Credit:** For one additional hour of credit, individuals can choose to spend an additional fifteen hours outside of class on one of the following projects:

- * an action research project
- * a study of an issue that is currently impacting their work in literacy education
- * create a teaching resource of significance that will truly contribute to your work, and potentially the work of others.
- * a project that is developed in consultation with the instructor

Students pursuing this additional hour of credit will need to meet regularly with the instructor: before beginning the project, midway through project development, and after completion of the project.

GRADING SCALE:

All assignments are graded based on your demonstrated awareness/knowledge/application/use of the above-mentioned outcomes and criteria for evaluation.

Evaluation and grading criteria

A to A-	Course work is of an exceptional standard (Standard English is used in oral and written communication), and the student demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the course goals and objectives. Assignments, research, and class discussions demonstrate insightful application of writing and instructional objectives as well as a commitment to personal improvement.
B+ to B-	Course work is of a professional standard (Standard English is used in oral and written communication). Student's work demonstrates a superficial understanding of course objectives.
C	Course work is not professionally presented, and incomplete understanding is exhibited in the assignments, research and/or class discussion.

MAXIMUM NUMBER OF POINTS AVAILABLE:

Attendance, Participation, Writer's Notebook and Preparation in Class	40%
Revised Piece of Writing, drafts and revisions	40%
Out of Class Assignments	10%
Writer's Journey reflection	10%
Total	100%

Scoring:

A 94%-100%	A- 90%- 93%	B+ 87%-89%	B 86%-84%
B- 83%-80	C+ 79%-77%	C 70%-76%	

Notice: The instructors reserve the right to change the syllabus, course assignments, and/or due dates.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES:

Please attend all classes and arrive on time. Absences, lateness, or leaving early will affect your grade.

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY:

Except in those instances when students are engaged in collaborative efforts, it will be expected that students will complete and submit their own work. Ideas taken verbatim or paraphrased from other sources should be clearly acknowledged through the inclusion of appropriate reference notes. When in doubt regarding the appropriate way to handle a specific situation, consult the course instructor. Instances of academic dishonesty may result in a failing grade for this course. Please refer to Section 1.8 of the Code of Student Conduct in the Student Handbook.